

# Are You Shopping on Black Friday?



This week is Thanksgiving, and that means that **Black Friday** is coming up at the end of the week. Are you planning to shop?

Americans spent \$11.4 billion at the mall last year on Black Friday – chasing deals and stocking up on stocking stuffers. Black Friday shopping is typically a mob scene. It's stressful, all of that consumption is bad for the planet, and those flash sales tend to bring out the worst in us. People push and shove, and shoppers have even been seriously injured.

This year, some stores are even planning to be open on Thanksgiving day, which means workers have to be away from their families so that they can sell cheap flat screens and discounted sweaters to go under the Christmas tree. Walmart workers are even planning a strike for Black Friday this year to protest their treatment around the holidays (and all year long).

So, what's an ethical shopper to do? Luckily, there are a few ways that you can opt out of the Black Friday madness, and two of them even let you get your shop on!

**Check out some ideas :**

## **Opting Out of Black Friday**

The allure of Black Friday, of course, is saving some cash and getting a jump on holiday shopping. I totally get that, and I am not saying that you shouldn't do holiday gifts if that's something you and your family like to do. Those billions of dollars that we spend as consumers on Black Friday weekend speak volumes, and there are ways to vote against Black Friday and still get your holiday on.

## **Buy Nothing Day**

Want to send a message to stores like Walmart? Skip the shopping on Black Friday weekend. Adbusters is once again organizing Buy Nothing Day to take a stand against the corporate culture of consumerism.

## **Small Business Saturday**

Did you know that many small businesses make most of their annual profits over the holidays? That means that many shops like indie bookstores and your local record shop rely on holiday sales to stay afloat for the whole rest of the year. When you're ready to check off names on that holiday list, hit those indie shops.

Small Business Saturday is the local economy's answer to Black Friday. Instead of hitting the big box store, find gifts from small, local businesses. You help your local economy thrive, keep a small business afloat, and show those big box stores that you value community over low, low prices.

**Yes, sometimes buying from a small business costs more**, and that's because small companies don't have the powers of scale that big corporations do. What you have to ask yourself is whether it's worth spending a few extra bucks – maybe buying less, but choosing quality – to support local business and stick it to large corporations.

## **Handmade Holiday**

Whether you make gifts yourself or choose to buy handmade, a handmade holiday sticks it to big box retailers and supports independent artists instead. Imagine if we pumped that \$11+ billion dollars into the handmade community instead of spending it at the mall!

You can find handmade gifts online on sites like Etsy and Artfire. Etsy started offering up gift cards earlier this year, too, which is a wonderful way to introduce friends and family to the world of handmade. You might also notice craft markets springing up in your town this time of year, and they are the perfect venue for holiday shopping! Meet the artist who crafted your purchases and support indie crafters!

If you're feeling crafty, this is the perfect time of year to flex those DIY muscles.

**Are you guys opting out of Black Friday this year?** What are your plans to make those holiday dollars count?

Read more: <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/black-friday.html#ixzz2CwhvcWN1>

Read more: <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/black-friday.html#ixzz2CwhkGbZl>

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